



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

I.

IN May, 1883, I was instrumental in founding the American Copyright League, the plan of which had been in my mind for several years. At that date, I learned that R. W. Gilder, editor of the "Century Magazine," and Dr. Edward Eggleston had planned a similar organization, without my knowledge, about two years before, but had never attempted to carry it out. I brought forward my plan before I knew of the other, and insisted that something ought to be done. After much correspondence and some personal interviews, I succeeded in getting up a meeting of authors, at the house of Mr. Brander Matthews. The result was very discouraging, because of the great variety of opinion expressed; but I persisted, and finally formed an executive committee of twenty, of which I was made secretary—the only officer besides the treasurer. This was the nucleus of the League. The committee subscribed a little money, but the treasurer went abroad, the acting treasurer left the city, and for six months I paid the expenses of the organization out of my own pocket. I enrolled thirty or forty members in the League, and something less than a dozen were enrolled by others. Finally, when Mr. Dorsheimer, without consulting us, brought in an international copyright bill in the House, the apathy of my associates had caused me almost to despair. But they were suddenly aroused. We went to work supporting the Dorsheimer bill, and adding to our roll until it contained seven hundred names. Mr. R. U. Johnson performed a vast and noble work in thus enlarging the membership. After the Dorsheimer bill failed to get a hearing, we introduced the Hawley bill in the Senate. It was stifled in the Committee on the Judiciary. I thought it a good bill to introduce, then. I assisted in drafting it, and before it was offered every word of it was submitted for my approval, as the authorized chairman of a sub-committee of the League's Executive Committee. Careful inquiry afterwards showed me that the Dorsheimer and Hawley bills had failed because they made no provision for *printing* foreign copyright books in this country. Paper-makers, type-founders, compositors, printers, binders, and a few publishers exerted a secret but decisive influence against the bills. These men were not opposed to international copyright, but capital and labor are both timid of changes in the condition of the market, and will always look out for the security of their own money interest before everything else. It was much easier and safer for them to kill or stifle an unsatisfactory bill, than to assist in bringing it to vote, and then offering an amendment which might not be carried.

Nearly all authors agree that a mere obligation to have the *printing* of books done in a certain country would not injure the rights and interests of authors. Consequently, it is absurd to stand against the imposing of such an obligation, when by consenting to it we could bring all the paper-makers, printers, binders, and most publishers to the support of a bill with a "printing clause."

Viewing the subject in this light, Allen Thorndike Rice, in May, 1885, moved, at a meeting of the Executive Committee, that we should insert in our constitution a statement (not to be published, of course, but merely to define and limit our policy) that we were willing to advocate a bill containing a "printing clause." He was supported by Prof. E. L. Youmans, Mr. Richard Henry Stoddard, and myself. Although I had approved the Hawley bill at the proper time, I agreed with Mr. Rice that in the light of experience and information, it ought to be offered again in an amended form. We held votes and proxies enough to carry the motion, but could not bring it to vote. Seeing that the mood of the Committee was dilatory and impracticable, Mr. Rice, Mr. Stoddard, and I resigned.

Certain members of the Committee, who never took and never would have taken the trouble to found a Copyright League and work gratuitously for it, insist that no concession shall be made as to printing in this country, if we give copyright to foreigners; although nearly all European countries place similar conditions and limitations upon copyright to foreigners. This body of gentlemen, who are authors, or represent authorship to a certain extent, are, I am sorry to say, one of the chief obstacles in the way of obtaining international copyright in this country. And, curiously enough, it was I who—setting out to gain international copyright—united them in the movement which they are now turning into an obstructionist one. If I wanted to characterize their action mildly, I should call it wild. If I wanted to stigmatize it severely, I should describe it as puerile.

GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP.

II.

MR. EDITOR: Somewhat to my disappointment, I find that the September number of the *REVIEW* lacks a most vigorous Comment upon "the Profane View of the Sanctum" taken in July by Rev. Savage. It seems to me that, in the interest of truth, if for no lesser reason, some one should have replied to it. Editors, I know, are prone to publish their own "comments," and, weary of the popular race to put one's words and name in print, are not inclined to volunteer personal contributions to rival or contemporary publications. Editors write for money, not "notoriety." But the errors and untruths in Mr. Savage's screed were so numerous that some able pen should have paused for a moment to aim in that direction.

I think an editorial "we" is justified by the fact that not the editors' personal opinions, but the wishes of manager, directors, and possibly friends, are expressed. The sources of editorial utterances are far anterior to the mouth-piece—in other words, beyond the personality of the writer. Does not Mr. Savage give the answer to his own aspersion, when he speaks of the editor performing double duty, and says: "It is somewhat difficult, therefore, to dis-

cover whether these leaders of public opinion themselves possess any opinions at all?"

2. It is simply not true that "no editor is ever known to confess ignorance or admit that he has been in the wrong." I have known many such "confessions."

3. "Peppery gossip!" Ah, if Mr. Savage could but know the "juicy morsels" that are *not* dispensed! It is a maxim of a certain successful newspaper publisher that "a good editor is known by what he will *not* publish." The scandals which are known to editors and never referred to in their newspapers are almost numberless. Hundreds of obscene or revolting telegrams go to the waste basket daily.

4. Judgment is a qualification of newspaper reporters. Were it not, every impression would bring a libel suit. What is keener in its way than the judgment of the trained reporter? He is a master of human nature.

5. It is *matter* if a sensational article turns out to be not true. It means discharge for the writer, and "explanations" to the party aggrieved.

6. I do not believe the "correspondents can practically make or unmake any public man's reputation." The truth will out.

7. I do not believe that any sober reporter ever wrote an entirely imaginative report of a sermon, and I am quite sure that if he did he lost his place within twenty-four hours.

If newspapers could be supported by passing a plate, we might reasonably demand a purer article. But they are sustained by the people, and the sheets which the masses love to read will prove profitable, "wax and grow fat," while those which are ahead or behind the age will die for lack of sustenance. This is the law. Ninety-nine papers out of one hundred are printed for gain. Expenses are enormous. The people expect the news, and if the "Tribune" gives it not, the "Tribune" will die. Theory never yet ran a daily journal. Many fortunes have been lost by men who thought otherwise, and expected to find the people standing in line with advertisements and subscription-money.

Mr. Savage's careless humor is due, no doubt, to ignorance. Too many ministers of the gospel, it is to be regretted, are wont to indulge in animadversion based upon a superficial knowledge of the subject discussed.

F. S. WOODBURY.

III.

MR. EDITOR: The answer by Rufus Hatch in the REVIEW for October to the question, "Ought our present National Banking System to be continued?" suggests a comparison, which I will make in the form of a story. Once upon a time, an enterprising "down-Easter" built a grist mill at the outlet of a small pond and for a few months did a satisfactory business, when of a sudden his mill stopped grinding. On investigating the cause of the stoppage, he found the pond drawn down. "A single danger menaced this system." In fact, without the pond he had no "system." He wisely concluded that it was of no use to try to continue the system when its distinguishing feature was non-existent. The distinguishing feature of our national banking system is

the national debt, the extinguishment of which will leave us, unless otherwise provided for, without a banking system.

Psalm upon the beauty of our system are pleasant enough, but in view of its early demise, suggestions for an inevitably necessary substitute would seem to be more in order just now.

JAMES N. CLARK.

IV.

MR. EDITOR : The objection of Mr. Field to Henry George's system of taxation is not well taken, and can be shown, by a little reflection, to be groundless. The necessary expenses of government, instead of the immense revenue equal to present economic rent, will be amply sufficient to ensure nationalization of land. The present value of land is forced, and is not the result of the uninterrupted growth of the community. As land is necessary to life, and its value has been constantly advancing, there is a demand for land beyond any other thing. The present system encourages this extraordinary desire, causing vast tracts to be withdrawn from use and advancing the price beyond all reason. The effect of a tax exclusively on land values would reduce its value at least in proportion to the tax. When the economic rent is five per cent. of the value, a tax of one per cent. would reduce the value one fifth, throwing lands held for an increase of price on the market, and causing unimproved lands close to the margin of cultivation to be abandoned, which must further reduce values and the area of taxable land, compelling a higher rate and a further reduction of value. The moment that land values are separated from improvements, and a tax put upon one that has been taken from the other, a great change will take place in public enterprise ; the current of human desires will quicken as if some marvelous discovery had offered untold happiness to a people. Land values vanishing, the desire for rent would vanish with them. Improvements reappearing in infinite variety, wages would advance with advancing desire. The people, in a spirit of self-preservation, would regard land as the instrument for the collection of taxes, instead of a patent of nobility, and the demand for it would cease.

HENRY RAWIE.

V.

MR. EDITOR : To make his figures prove that Christianity is on the increase, Dr. Parkhurst should show that every attendant at a Christian house of worship is a believer, and that considerations of fashion, society, personal credit, popularity, curiosity, etc., have nothing whatever to do with pew-holding, the contributing of money to, or attendance on, the churches. Then he should supplement this proof with statements showing that infidel, agnostic, and materialistic publications are on the decrease ; that all dubitation as to the tenets of Christianity is disappearing from the literature of the day ; that that dubitation appears no longer in popular conversation ; and that crimes, defalcations, and immoralities, and all those offenses against which Christianity warns, are surely and substantially decreasing. Then he will be able to prove by figures the fact he so earnestly hopes to make us believe.

JOHN W. BELL.